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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Declassify: ( ) In Part ( ) In Full

( ) Classify as \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Extend as \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Downgrade to \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Declassify on \_\_\_\_\_ Reason \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Our Embassy in Buenos Aires has forwarded to us its comments on your letter of July 26 regarding statements reportedly made by Mr. Robert C. Hill in a recent interview with Gente magazine with reference to the Olga Talamante case. I understand your visit to Argentina afforded you the chance to discuss this issue in detail with an Embassy official on the evening of August 19. The pertinent points in the Olga Talamante case are as follows:

1. Argentine authorities never informed the Embassy that Miss Talamante had been detained, but neither did she request that they do so. She did not attempt to communicate with our Embassy. The State Department first learned of her arrest through her friends in the United States.

2. Olga Talamante was arrested on November 10, 1974, a year earlier than the date indicated in your files.

3. Miss Talamante was first visited by Embassy officials on December 4, 1974. Her original complaint of torture, however, was not made to an Embassy official, but rather to her friends in this country.

4. The U. S. government did protest Argentina's failure to notify the Embassy of Miss Talamante's arrest. The alleged mistreatment was protested as well.

5. The U. S. doctor was unable to confirm any allegations of mistreatment. He found a bruise on her

The Honorable

Dante B. Fascell, Chairman

Subcommittee on International Operations,

Committee on International Relations,

House of Representatives.

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ankle the size of a U. S. quarter which, according to him, could have been made by nylon rope or by banding her ankle against a bedpost.

6. According to the judge, the prison doctor who examined her found a red mark on her back of undetermined origin. Miss Talamante claimed that it was caused by mistreatment; the police denied this. The judge was unable to confirm or deny her allegations on the basis of medical examination alone.

I hope that these comments will be helpful to you. If you have any more questions, please feel free to contact me again.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary  
for Congressional Relations

Drafted:ARA/ECA:JBumpus:jc  
Retyped: 9/8/77:x29166:#7720032

Clearance:ARA/ECA:RWZimmerman  
ARA:GLister  
H:CCutter